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**REVIEW**

OF

**HIGH CHURCH AND ARMINIAN**

**PRINCIPLES.**

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## REVIEW, &c.

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IN examining the history of the church in past ages, we find but two grand divisions, in respect to the momentous subject of man's salvation. Before the reformation, these divisions consisted of those who held to justification through the merits of Christ *alone*, and those who mingled with the doctrines of grace, what they denominated the "freedom of the will," ecclesiastical observances, and personal exertions, as sharing in the work of securing our acceptance with God. The Waldenses and the Lollards once composed the former, and the countless hosts of Papacy the latter. Since the reformation, when protestantism arose to the partial extinction of the papal order, this same distinction has appeared more generally, under the denomination of Calvinists and Arminians. Not that all who belong to the former class subscribe to every sentiment of Calvin, or that the great body of the latter class, have confined themselves within the limits prescribed by the cautious policy of Arminius. The fundamental principles of a system are one thing, the mode of defending them is quite another. With the progress of biblical criticism and mental philosophy, the controversy has repeatedly changed its aspect on minor points. Proof passages have been abandoned on both sides, which were once contended for, as "*articuli stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*." Numerous philosophical explanations of the two opposing systems, which in the eagerness of debate had been considered as of equal importance with the systems themselves, have gradually sunk into oblivion before the progress of mental and moral science. Since the days of Edwards, particularly, those in this country, who maintain the doctrines of grace, have given increased precision and clearness to their statement of these doctrines. Technical terms have been employed with greater accuracy; sweeping declarations of a general nature have been more carefully guarded by the proper qualifications; and some doctrinal positions which were once thought indispensable to the support of the whole system, have been found of no advantage—mere buttresses erected by the hands of men, to sustain the rock of ages. Thus for example, the doctrine of limited atonement; of our participation in the act or criminality of Adam's sin; of special grace as in any other sense irresistible, than that it is not *actually* resisted; or of any want of freedom or ability in man, except such as consists in his intense *aversion* to holiness,—although designed by their inventors to support the doctrines of grace.—have to a great extent, been rejected

by Calvinists in later times. But the great and fundamental difference between the friends and the enemies of the doctrines of grace, remains unchanged. The former believe in the utter alienation of the human heart from God, and its entire destitution of holiness, in a state of nature; the latter reject this doctrine with indignation and maintain that a portion of divine influence is imparted to each individual of our race to restore his “lapsed powers,” which principle of grace, as they term it, will under the cultivation of human effort, ripen into the maturity of holiness, and secure eternal life. The former consider God’s choice of men to eternal life, as a choice to make certain individuals holy or believers, and thus to *prepare* them for heaven; the latter contend that this choice or determination results solely from God’s *foreseeing* that these individuals *will* be holy or believers, and that his gracious purposes are *dependent* on this contingency. The former hold, that spiritual regeneration is the result of a *special* operation of the Holy Spirit; the latter ascribe this change to the *ordinary* influence of that divine agent, enjoyed in equal degrees by all, and made effectual, whenever it becomes so, by the choice of the individual to yield to that influence—thus securing the favorite point, that it is the man himself, and not God, “who maketh us to differ.” The former maintain the unchanging love of God to those whom he has brought to repentance: that carrying them forward in the progress of his merciful moral cultivation here, he will present them in full and final justification at the last day; the latter believe in successive fluctuations, from a state of holiness and acceptance, to a state of sin and condemnation. We will only add, that the former consider man as a complete moral agent in *himself*, aside from all divine influence; as capable, in every respect, of performing his whole duty; and deterred from doing it by no other cause than his intense aversion to holiness. They of course maintain, that those individuals whom God does not choose to eternal life, or renew by his special grace, have no ground of complaint, since they are under no *necessity* of continuing in sin, or falling short of salvation, but might all in the exercise of their own capacities as moral agents, return to their allegiance and receive the mercy offered equally to all. The charges of fatalism, of making God a hard master, etc. which are so often urged against those who maintain the doctrines of grace, are therefore without foundation, and derive all their plausibility from the grossest misrepresentation.\*

In no part of christendom has the contest between the friends and enemies of the doctrines of grace, been maintained with more spirit and determination, than in the church of England. But from

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\*See this subject discussed in our last No. Review of methodist doctrines.

the time of Charles II. to the latter part of the last century, the doctrines of Arminius were generally prevalent in that communion, owing to the low state of public morals, the deadening influence of a religious establishment, and the natural tendencies of the human heart. Connected with these doctrines in the English church, we usually find what are denominated **HIGH CHURCH PRINCIPLES**. By these is meant, the assertion of some peculiar and mysterious efficacy in the ordinances performed by an episcopal priesthood. In the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for example, the communicant is brought near to his Savior in a manner, which no ardor of love or aspirations of faith, could in themselves secure. The infant presented at the baptismal font is instantly "born again in this regenerating ordinance," is "translated from a state of condemnation to a state of grace," and "obtains a *title* to the influences of the Holy Spirit, and the forgiveness of sins."\* According to these principles, too, where there is no prelatical bishop, there is nothing which can be acknowledged as a church of Christ, and no covenant or promise known to exist, of eternal life. The simple want of subjection to a prelatical priesthood, turns men over to the uncovenanted mercies of the heathen, with the accumulated guilt of rejecting the means which God has himself appointed for their salvation. The followers of the late Dr. Hobart unite with that gentleman in declaring, that "none *can* possess authority to administer the sacraments, but those who have received a commission from the bishops of the (Episcopal) Church"—that "great is the *guilt*, and imminent the *danger* of those, who negligently or wilfully continue in a state of separation from the authorized ministrations of the church, and participate of ordinances administered by an irregular and *invalid* authority; wilfully rending the peace and unity of the church, by separating from the administration of its authorized priesthood; obstinately contemning the means which God has prescribed for their salvation. They are guilty of *rebellion* against the Almighty Lawgiver and Judge: they expose themselves to the awful displeasure of that Almighty Jehovah, who will not suffer his institutions to be contemned, or his authority violated, with impunity."† Some high churchmen there are indeed, who do not

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\* Grant, the high church historian, states the doctrine thus. "This opinion supposes a charm, a secret virtue, by which, to state an extreme case, a vicious minister of the church of England can confer something *necessary to salvation*, as a sacrament is, while the same office performed by a pious sectary, who has in his heart devoted himself to God, is an absolute nullity." Yet, strange as it may seem, after stating the case thus strongly in the form of an objection, he declares that the fact is so. "*Truth is sacred and immutable, and must be received, whatever inconveniences attend its reception.*" *Grant's English Church. Vol. II. p. 7—8.*

† Companion for the Altar, edition of 1814. pp. 193—200. 203—204. Since this article was written, we have looked into the last edition of this work, and



go the full length of these statements. They do not *positively* unchurch all other denominations, they only do it *negatively*. They will not *admit* any church but their own to exist; they see no *reason* whatever to believe it; they "are yet to *learn*," in the words of bishop Ravenscroft, "where a promise to fallen man is to be found, that is not *limited* on the previous condition, that he be a member of the visible (Episcopal) Church on earth." Now this negative exclusion—this refusal to acknowledge any other communion as a church of Christ—though not so presumptuous or offensive as the positive declarations of bolder men, amounts to precisely the same thing in all its *practical results*. He who *sees* no authority for the rites of other denominations, must act as if there were none; and in a matter which he deems of so much importance, must use all his endeavors to make others act so likewise. Indeed, with the final and perfect revelation of God's will in our hands, to say *we see no authority* for any church ordinances but our own, *we are yet to learn* where any promise is made except to those of our communion—what is it but to say in more modest terms, "we do believe there *is* none?" To make any nice distinctions between *un*-belief, and *dis*-belief in such a case, does seem to us extremely idle. It is a subject on which the scriptures are very far from being silent, on which all antiquity, if we may credit high churchmen, has spoken in the most decided manner; and if with all these means of knowledge we *are yet to learn* where any covenant or promise for fallen man can be found, except within the boundaries of a single church, it is vain to hope that a coming eternity will disclose any thing but unmingled wrath, for those who, under all this light, have rejected the most sacred institutions of their Maker. Here, in a condition worse, we apprehend, than that of the heathen, the high churchman leaves thousands of protestant churches, which have been walking in faith and love from the time of the reformation to the present hour; while the church of Rome, that mother of abominations, is freely recognized as a part of Christ's mystical body, a pillar in the temple of the living God \*

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find that some of these expressions have been altered in a manner to strike the mind less offensively, but no one, we suppose, will contend that Dr. Hobart ever changed his sentiments on this subject. We have here the plain exposition of his views as always maintained by him, and as now maintained by his followers; and we are therefore fully authorized to appeal to the statements quoted above. If there were reason to believe that in softening or generalizing the expressions, Dr. Hobart meant to give up any part of the ground taken, the case would be different. But this we presume, no one will say.

\* "I do believe the church of Rome," says archbishop Laud, "to be a true church. Were she not a true church, it were hard with the church of England, since from her the English bishops derive their apostolic succession." "It is obvious from our acknowledging as valid the orders of its (the Roman Catholic church) apostate clergy, that we have a still stronger affinity towards that

And so great is the importance attached to these sentiments, that candidates for holy orders as well in this country as in England, have actually been held back from ordination, for venturing to express the contrary opinion.

Far be it from us to intimate, however, that such are universally the sentiments of Episcopalians. The church of England, our readers are aware, has witnessed a gradual revival of religion, within the last thirty years. Among the most active promoters of this revival, were the two Milners, Dr. Scott, Mr. Wilberforce, Mrs. H. Moore, Mr. Gisborne, Mr. Leigh Richmond, and the great body of writers, who were associated in support of the *Christian Observer*. To these persons, under God, the English church is indebted for nearly all the spiritual religion, which now exists within her ample boundaries; and for the share she has taken in those noble efforts of christian benevolence, the abolition of the slave trade, the establishment of bible, missionary, and tract societies, which are the glory of the present age. Actuated by such a spirit, it was impossible for them to lay any stress on outward rites and ordinances, as constituting an important part in a title to eternal life. They were, indeed, strongly attached, to their own modes of worship; many of them believed the Episcopal form of government to have prevailed in the primitive churches; and all were naturally desirous, that spiritual religion should be revived, not by the progress of dissent, but by restoring a decayed establishment to its earlier and better principles. With these views, while they labored to promote the cause of evangelical religion in their own church, they extended the hand of christian fellowship and affection to the pious of every communion. Mr. Gisborne for example, totally disclaims the *jure divino* principle; affirming that the apostles "left no command which rendered episcopacy universally indispensable in future ages." In like manner, the *Christian Observer*, (speaking undoubtedly for those of its own sentiments,) says, "Episcopalians found not the merits of their cause on any express injunction or delineation of church government in the scriptures, *for there is none.*" vol. iii. page 155.\* Many there are in *this* country of the same principles, and with such we have no contention. It is nat-

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church, than to other bodies of professing christians, who hold a doctrine nearly as pure as our own; thus making the form rather than the faith, the constituent and vital principle of a church." Such is admitted by Grant to be the high church sentiment. Vol. II. p. 7.

\* One of the principal conductors of the *Christian Observer* remarked, not many years since, to one of the conductors of this work, "I have not for ten years seen the man who was so utterly foolish, as to claim any exclusive divine right for our ordination or ordinances, or who hesitated to acknowledge other communions as churches of Christ." The remark only shows perhaps how little the evangelical of that church, mingle with their opponents in their own church.

ural for men to feel a strong preference for the modes of worship in which they have been early educated. Their love for religion itself becomes in some degree identified with an attachment to the forms, with which it has always been associated. And if any who have been educated in *our* modes of worship, can find more spiritual improvement in substituting a liturgy for extemporaneous prayer, with all our hearts we bid them God speed in the change, while we utterly condemn the spirit, that even by a look would give them pain in making it. Feeling this, we feel likewise that we have a right to demand similar treatment from others. When, therefore, on public occasions, we hear the principles and institutions of our churches pointedly condemned as a departure from the ordinances established by Christ; when such sentiments are zealously inculcated in conversation and through the press, in almost every part of our country; when those who would wish to join our communion, are repressed with the most solemn admonitions, that they are departing from the appointed way of salvation; and when all this is associated with the severest reprobation of the doctrinal sentiments maintained in our churches, we think ourselves called upon, at times, to speak in our own defense, and to examine the principles of those who are thus unsparing in their condemnation of ours.

It is not our design, however, at present to inquire into the foundation of these high pretensions. Their utter futility has been too often demonstrated to call for any remarks from us. It is, indeed, a striking fact, that they have never been put down with a stronger hand, or trampled more triumphantly in the dust, than by Episcopal writers, especially by Bishop Stillingfleet and Sir Peter King. Leaving this part of the subject, therefore, in their hands, we shall offer some remarks of a more general nature, on the system of High Church and Arminian principles, more especially as maintained by the followers of Dr. Hobart.

I. This system, we conceive, is a *departure from the original principles of the Episcopal Church of England*, as established at the era of the reformation. In reference to ecclesiastical discipline, no historical fact is more certain than this, that all the reformed churches renounced the principle of any divine right of Episcopal ordination. As a single instance, we may mention the Smalcaldic Articles in 1533, which strenuously assert the identity of bishops and presbyters, and their equality by divine right, in the power of ordination. These were signed by nearly eight thousand ministers,<sup>7</sup> among whom were Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, etc. To a similar effect was the declaration of the *Function* of the English Church about the same period, which states, that "in the new testament there is no mention of any degree or distinction of orders, but



only of *deacons* or ministers, and of *priests* or bishops.”\* This declaration was signed by thirty-seven distinguished civilians and divines, and by thirteen bishops. Nor was this subject, as some have insinuated, hastily decided on by the English reformers. On the contrary, it was regarded as one of the cardinal points of the reformation, and was examined by them with great care and deliberation. It was one of a number of queries propounded to a large council of the most distinguished divines and bishops, under Henry VIII. As a specimen of the answers which were then given, we transcribe the following.

CRANMER, Archbishop of Canterbury. “The bishops and priests were at one time, and were no two things, but both *one* office, in the beginning of Christ’s religion.”

DR. COX, afterwards bishop of Ely under Elizabeth. “By scripture (as Jerome saith) bishops and priests be *one*. Yet bishops as they are now, were *after* priests, and therefore *made* of priests.”

DR. REDMAN. “At the beginning, were both *one*—wherefore one made the other indifferently.”†

To a similar effect were the decisions of Dr. Day, Dr. Edgeworth, The Bishop of London, and generally of the most distinguished friends of the reformation. Accordingly, these principles were embodied by the bishops in the Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man, which was approved by a vote of both houses of parliament in 1543, and prefaced with an epistle by the king himself. In this it is declared, that “priests and bishops are by God’s law *one and the same*, and that the powers of ordination and excommunication belong equally to *both*.” These were the principles of the English Church during the whole reign of Edward VI. Foreign churches were recognized by the reformers as in the fullest sense churches of Christ. A large number of foreign divines were invited by Cranmer from abroad to aid in the reformation, and were instantly employed in clerical duties without one hint of re-ordination.‡ On the restoration of the English church, on its present

\* Bishop Burnet’s Hist. of Ref. I. 321 fol.

† Burnet I. 223.

‡ Among these was the celebrated John Knox, who was chaplain to the king, and was sent also by the privy council to preach at Berwick, see Strype’s Annals III 235. Martyn Bucer was another, who officiated, says Strype, at St. Martins Cambridge do. do. II. 207. At the death of Bucer, a funeral sermon was preached by Parker, afterwards the most active in establishing the church on its present footing, as first archbishop under Elizabeth. In this sermon he terms Bucer a “chief master workman” placed there by God; and dwells with much feeling on the loss sustained by the church, and on the certain *happiness* to which Bucer had departed. Strype’s life of Parker, 29. How little does all this look like *doubting* whether the “promises” of the gospel belong to those who are out of the Episcopal church!

footing, under Elizabeth, it was enacted by parliament 'that the ordination of foreign churches should be held valid, and that those who had no other orders, should be of like capacity with others to enjoy any place of ministry in England.'\* That these were the sentiments of the clergy at this time, is most evident. "The first who solemnly appeared in vindication of the English hierarchy," says Bishop Stillingfleet, "was archbishop Whitgift, a sage and prudent person, whom we cannot suppose ignorant of the sense of the church of England, or afraid or unwilling to defend it. Yet he frequently against Cartwright asserts 'no form of church government is by the scriptures prescribed to, or commanded the church of God.' And so Dr. Cosins his chancellor, 'it cannot be proved that any certain particular form of church government, is commanded to us by the word of God.' Dr. Loe, 'no certain form of government is prescribed in the word.' Bishop Bridges, 'God hath not expressed the form of church government.'" "They who are pleased but to consult the third book of the learned and judicious Mr. Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity," adds Stillingfleet, "may see the *mutability* of church government, largely asserted and fully proved."† Iren : part II. c. vii. § 3.

The learned Whittaker too, professor of divinity in Cambridge at the same period, and who was chiefly employed in the controversy with the papists, declares as the doctrine of the reformed, (in his controversy with Bellarmin and Dureus) that "presbyters being by divine right the *same* as bishops, they might warrantably set other presbyters over the churches." It was on this ground, that speaking in behalf of the English Church, he defended the validity of ordination, as performed by Luther, Zuingle, Bucer, etc. Little did he or his associates imagine, that protestants would ever unite with papists, in calling that ordination in question. When this was first done by Dr. Brancroft, in his sermon at Paul's cross, towards the close of Elizabeth's reign, it excited so much surprise, that Sir Frances Knolls wrote to Dr. John Reynolds one of the translators of the bible, and universally regarded as the most learn-

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\* Strype as quoted by Neal, 1. 366.

† The only attempt which we have ever heard of to evade these testimonies, is by saying that "church government" here, may not have referred to the different orders of clergy in the church, but merely to other ecclesiastical constitutions. But Stillingfleet, with the originals before him, did so understand them, and cited them to establish his position, that there is no unalterable divine right in the clergy. These declarations too, were made against Cartwright the puritan, who asserted the exclusive divine right of *presbyterian* ordination. Whitgift and the rest therefore, if they spoke to the point in debate, meant to deny what Cartwright maintained, viz. that the scriptures had laid down one immutable constitution for the *orders* of the clergy, discipline, etc. of the church.

ed man of the age, for his opinion on this subject. Reynolds replied that even Bellermin acknowledged the weakness of Dr. B's. pretension. "It may be added" he says "that they who for five hundred years have been industrious in reforming the church, have thought, that all pastors, whether called bishops or presbyters, have according to the word of God *like* power and authority." He then appeals in confirmation of his statement, to the Waldenses, Wickliff and his followers, Huss and his disciples, Luther, Calvin, Brentius, Bullinger and Musculus; to many English bishops as Jewell, author with Cranmer of the articles and homilies, Pillington and others; and to Bradford, Lambert, and many more of the early confessors of the English church. He adds, that this was the common doctrine of the reformed churches in Switzerland, Savoy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Hungary and Poland. It was not until forty years after, in the time of Archbishop Laud, that high church principles gained much footing in the English church, and even long after that, Stillingfleet says, "It is acknowledged by the stoutest champions of episcopacy, before these *late* unhappy divisions, that ordination performed by presbyters in case of necessity, is valid; which I have already shown doth evidently prove that episcopal government is not founded on any unalterable *divine right*."\*

It is equally certain, that Arminian principles, which are now commonly associated with High Church pretensions, were a total departure from the original doctrine of the English Church. In the year 1595, these principles were first preached in the University of Cambridge, by William Barret, fellow of Gonville and Caius College. So great was the offense given by his sermon to the heads of the colleges, that they resorted to measures of great severity on the subject. In reporting their proceedings to the Chancellor of the University, they say, "This sermon being so offensive to the church, and so strongly savoring of the leaven of *popery*, and contrary to the doctrine, nature, quality, and condition of faith, as set forth in the *articles* of religion, and *homilies* appointed to be read in churches, and that hath been taught *ever since her majesty's reign*, in sermons, and defended in public schools, and open commencements, without contradiction in the universities; we thought it meet to repress these *novelties* of doctrine by such means as our statutes do appoint." They then proceed to state the crime of Barret, viz. his "impudent challenging of Calvin, Beza, Peter Martyr, Zanchius, and others, of error in the doctrines of faith, in most bitter terms, *whom we never knew in our church heretofore, to be touched in that matter*." They therefore required

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\* Iren : part II. chap. viii. § 7.



of Barret a public recantation, which was accordingly made in St. Mary's Church, Cambridge. "He revoked what he had preached there *ad clerum*, according to the sense, which was afterwards called *Arminianism*, about predestination, faith, perseverance," etc. and added, "I do beseech you to pardon this my rashness, also that I uttered many bitter words against Peter Martyr, Theodore Beza, Jerome Zanchius, Francis Junius, and the rest of the same religion, *being the lights and ornaments of our church.*"\*

Nor is it wonderful that these novelties produced so much excitement, for during this reign the Institutes of Calvin, says Stapleton, "were so greatly esteemed in England, that the book hath been accurately translated into English, *and even fixed in the parish churches for the people to read.* Moreover in each of the universities, after the students have finished their circuit in philosophy, as many of them as are designed for the ministry, *are lectured first of all on that book.*" Accordingly Heylen, the friend of Laud, and an avowed adversary of Calvinism, says of the reign of Elizabeth, under whom the English Church was settled on its present foundation, "Predestination and the points depending thereupon, were received as the established doctrines of the Church of England. It was safer for a man, in those days, to be looked upon as a heathen or publican, than an anti-Calvinist." *Life of Laud.*

That these were the principles of the early fathers of that church, during the reign of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. is equally certain. Their choice of Peter Martyr and Bucer, (confessedly of the same sentiments with those of Calvin,) as the first professors of *theology* at Cambridge and Oxford, are the strongest possible demonstration of this fact. In their writings, too, we find the doctrine of election, of the saints perseverance and kindred points, continually insisted upon, as cardinal doctrines of the gospel. A few passages may suffice as specimens.

TINDAL. "God's elect *cannot so fall that they rise not.*" "Paul teacheth God's predestination, whence it springeth altogether, *whether we shall believe or not believe.*"†

CRANMER. "This article speaketh of the *elect*, in whom finally shall no fault be, but they shall *perpetually continue and endure.*" "We wretched sinners do not *prevent* God, or *go before him* in the

\* See a full account of this transaction given by Dr. Scott, author of the Commentary on the Bible, in his remarks on Dr. Tolmin. Vol. II. p. 752.

† The reader will remark how careful the reformers were to cut off the evasion, afterwards resorted to by Arminians, viz. that men are elected or predestined on account of their *foreseen faith*. The very *existence* of faith itself, they state, is the thing contemplated in predestination. Men are chosen to be *made* believers, not because they *will* become believers.



work of our justification; but it is God that layeth the *first* foundation of our salvation."

BRADFORD, the Martyr. "Faith is the *work* and *gift* of God, given to none other than those whom God the Father, before the beginning of the world, hath *predestinated* in Christ to eternal life."

JEWELL, one of the authors of the homilies and articles. "His election is *sure forever*: *ye shall not fall from grace*, ye shall not perish."

HOMILY for Whitsunday. "Man of his own nature is sinful and disobedient, *without one spark of goodness* in him, without any virtuous or godly motion."\*

ARCHBISHOP PARKER. "The elect may waver and be troubled, but they *cannot utterly be deceived and overcome*."

Testimonies of this kind might be swelled to the size of volumes; indeed they already fill six large octavo volumes, as collected by the Rev. Leigh Richmond, in his *Fathers of the English Church*, from which the above extracts are taken. No historical fact can be clearer than this, that the men, who in these latter days insist so strongly on High Church and Arminian principles, as the standard of churchmanship, are chargeable with a departure from the early principles of the Episcopal Church. In exposing what we deem their errors, therefore, we are not only defending ourselves against that spirit which unchurches every other denomination under heaven; but we are speaking in behalf of those in the Episcopal Church, who are reviled and persecuted, for adhering to the faith and catholic principles of CRANMER, LATIMER, JEWELL, and RIDLEY.

II. The tendency of High Church principles is, in our view, *hostile to the peculiar institutions of our country*. There is certainly nothing dangerous to a republican government, in the mere fact that clergymen are ordained by a bishop, rather than by "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." If the power thus delegated is felt and acknowledged to be exercised as a matter of mere expediency, and is liable to be recalled when abused to evil purposes, we can see no possible objection to such a constitution of things, in any community which may think best to adopt it. But when this power is claimed by a few individuals, as centering in their persons by a *divine right*; and when our obedience to this power is demanded under the most awful penalties of God's displeasure, it is a serious question, what must be the consequences of yielding to such a claim.

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\* This Dr. Tolmin, the great Arminian authority of the day, directly contradicts. "We can by no means allow, that of our own nature we are *without any spark of goodness*." And yet he has subscribed to the articles and is bound by the homilies.

Religious institutions and ordinances are indispensable to our social, civil, and national existence. Hence, we must have men set apart for religious purposes; and these men, from their station and employment, will exert on the public mind and morals a prodigious influence. But, on high church principles, what kind of men are they? Just such as a small number of bishops may please to commission and send among us. The newly appointed prelate of New-York, for example, holds directly from God himself, the only power which is known or can be acknowledged, of commissioning the ministers of the gospel for nearly two millions of souls. No one can be recognized, in this immense multitude of rational and immortal beings, as authorized to engage in the ministry of reconciliation, in any way, or under any ecclesiastical regulations, until he has gone to that gentleman, subscribed the articles of *his* faith, and taken from *his* hands, as the delegated agent of God, the power to preach the gospel of his Son! Every minister within a territory as large as all New-England, on whose head the hands of a bishop have not been laid, must at once leave his people, repair to the altar of prescription, or never again presume to preach the love of God, or break the bread of life. What a scene would be opened in this country by high church principles, carried out into full operation, as they unquestionably ought to be, if resting on the authority of God! The whole body of our ten thousand clergy, with the exception of less than six hundred, thrown out of the sacred office forever, unless their consciences and their faith could be made to quadrate with the standard set up by a small body of men among us! What man on this continent would possess any thing like the power of an American bishop? What power is so controlling as religious supremacy—what grasp so unyielding as that of individual authority, rendered fearless by popular submission, and awful as death by the presumed appointment of God? Such must inevitably be the power of those who hold the only authority known or believed to exist, of commissioning the ministers of religion for twelve millions of people—of saying who shall, and who shall not, preach the gospel of Christ. And how shall the body of the people resist the abuse of this power to the worst of purposes? Shall they withdraw from the church, like our puritan fathers, and seek religious liberty under the protection of our free institutions? But this is “rebellion against Almighty God;” or at least there is the utmost reason to believe so, and none to believe otherwise. It cuts off the soul, at once, from all known covenanted title or hope of eternal life; and, as we are now supposing the whole community to be fully enlightened on this subject, no one can be weak enough to sacrifice the salvation of his soul, for the poor recompense of maintaining his rights as a freeman. Let high

church principles be universally embraced in this country, (as they ought to be if they are correct) and we have at once an ESTABLISHED CHURCH, resting not on the weak basis of human enactments, but on the immutable command of God himself. For the clergy of this church, we are bound in conscience, and by divine injunction to provide a full and honorable support. "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate with him that teacheth in all good things." This support must all go to such religious teachers as a small body of bishops, think proper to appoint and ordain. The people have no option in the case but this, they may arrange among themselves how to *dispose*, in the most satisfactory manner, of the individuals whom the bishop shall designate for the care of their souls.

The power of the men thus designated, too, is tremendously great. It lies with them to administer or withhold those sacraments, which, in the words of the High Church historian, "are necessary to salvation." It is madness to hesitate for a moment in yielding implicit obedience to those who have the awful prerogative of granting or withholding a "covenant title" to eternal life; or to array ourselves in "rebellion" against our Maker, by refusing to receive the rites of his religion, on those conditions, which his "regularly ordained clergy" may think proper to prescribe. But what will be the consequence of such power in the clergy? Unless we shut our eyes on all the past history of our race, and suppose that God has conferred an absolute *infallibility* on the priesthood which he has placed over us, with such awful sanctions to enforce our obedience, we know and are certain, that this authority will be abused, in a manner totally inconsistent with our rights and privileges as freemen.

And who is ignorant of the practical operation of high church principles, where they have acted without restraint? What principles created and supported the court of High Commission? Who advocated the arbitrary measures of the house of Stuart? "Who opposed the glorious revolution of 1688?" "And who were the enemies of our own *more* glorious revolution?" "*High churchmen, the world knows.*" In the language of one of the ablest men of our age, we declare, "on the other hand, in all these instances, low churchmen and dissenters, united heartily and co-operated vigorously." "The faithful records of history afford on this subject, a series of most instructive facts, and warrant the strongest conclusions as to the tendency of high church principles."

A bishop in this country, has it in his power to a great extent, to secure the prevalence and succession of his own sentiments and practices, whatever they may be; for he ordains the clergy of his diocese, and they are such and only such, in sentiment and character, as he is pleased to commission. These are the men, who with associated laymen of their own vestries, are to elect a



successor to *him*, who has thus created *them*. It is not difficult, to see how certain this succession may be made, and how long the influence of error and religious intolerance may be perpetuated. And now, we ask, have not power and influence established by these means, been already exerted in this country, with very great and unsparing effect? Have not the noblest designs of christian charity, the exalted enterprise of giving the bible to every family in our land, the most generous efforts for the instruction of oppressed christian nations, or of the heathen world "lying in wickedness," been repeatedly shut out from nearly the whole of a diocese, by a single word? 'The BISHOP does not approve of these efforts, he thinks it improper for any one to solicit our aid for such objects!' A hundred churches are instantly closed, and ten thousand hearts are steeled against those men, who are pleading perhaps for the very charities, which originated in the zeal and piety of the evangelical of the English church. We call in question no man's motives. We undertake not to decide whether any individual has acted right or wrong, in the exercise of the power thus assumed. But we do ask, must not that *system* be wrong, hostile to our liberal institutions, and pernicious to the interests of true religion, which thus tends to place the consciences of a whole diocese under the control of a single man, and to make our religious charities, the noblest characteristic of the present age, dependent on his will? "Religious principles will be felt every where. No circle of private life, no department of government, but must feel them. They belong to the mind itself." What then must be the effect on freedom of mind among us, on the exercise of private judgment, and above all on the rights of conscience, if such a system should ever become predominant in this country? The history of the world gives but one answer.

While, therefore, we see nothing hostile to our free institutions in the catholic spirit of those, who acknowledge every other evangelical communion to be equally with themselves a part of the church of Christ, we do believe that nothing but a standing miracle could save us from the consequences of a general prevalence of High Church principles; giving as they do to a few men, chosen for life, the only known power on earth of commissioning our ten thousand clergy, and cloathing that clergy with the awful prerogative of granting or withholding these sacred ordinances, without which there is no known covenant of mercy, or promise of eternal life. If this be truth, and if these principles must generally prevail among us, we can only say, that the less must yield to the greater, the freedom of our country to the salvation of our souls.

III. *The conditions of salvation*, as laid down by the high church writers, are in our view, (and with pain we say it) *diametrically opposed to the declarations of the word of God*. The scriptures di-



vide the whole human race into two great classes, those who are in a state of condemnation, and those who are in a state of grace or favor with God. The former are described as "children of wrath," the latter as "children of God;" the one as "alienated and enemies in their minds by wicked works," the other as "reconciled" to God, and members of Christ's body; the one as "having no hope, and without God in the world," the other as "partakers of the promises," and made "heirs of the kingdom" of his dear Son. The most important question, then, which can be asked on this side of the eternal world, is this, What is that change in man, which translates him from a state of condemnation into a state of grace or favor with God? The followers of Dr. Hobart answer, BAPTISM: and in this sentiment we suppose most high churchmen coincide. "In this regenerating ordinance (baptism) fallen man is born again from a state of *condemnation* into a state of *grace*."\* "Our church," says Dr. Hobart in his volume of sermons, "in all her services, considers *baptized* christians (i. e. baptized persons) as regenerate; as called into a *state of salvation*; as made *members* of Christ; *children* of God; *heirs* to the kingdom of heaven." Now, we ask, is it possible to affirm more strongly, that the simple act of baptism *prepares the soul for heaven*? It makes its subjects "heirs of the kingdom," "children of God," "in a *state* of grace or salvation." True, they must continue in this state, must go on to repent of sin when committed, and to put their trust in Christ, to the end of life. But that great change in their character and condition, without which no man can see the Lord, is effected by baptism! This makes them in a moment "children of God," and should any individual among them die at that moment, he must of course be saved. Now, we ask, is this the doctrine of the New Testament? Can the act of a fallible man thus remove the condemning sentence of God, and secure the salvation of the soul? The supposition, all will agree, is impious, unless the renewing influence of the Spirit, does *invariably* attend the administration of the ordinance of baptism. But where in the whole bible have we any intimation of such a fact? What too, is the testimony of experience on this subject? Do all baptized persons in the Episcopal church give evidence of that great spiritual change, which is so entire and absolute, as to be termed "*life from the dead*?" Are they without exception crucified to the world, and the world crucified to them? The utmost stretch of charity will not authorize the supposition.

The apostles too—did they act like men who believed the rite of baptism to be invariably followed by deliverance from condem-

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\* Comp. for the Altar, p. 186.

nation, and the renewal of the heart from on high? Why, then, all their labors, reasonings, exhortations, and entreaties to bring their hearers to Christ, when they had only to baptize them at once; and by "this regenerating ordinance," instantly to place them in a "state of salvation?" No! In all the directions which the Apostles gave to sinners, as recorded in the Acts, baptism is never alluded to but once, and then as *following*, not leading to a change of heart. This outward rite they uniformly represented as the mere *symbol* of a spiritual change, which was supposed *already* to have taken place.\*

"Can any man forbid water," says Peter, "that these should not be baptized?" But why baptize these men? To place them in a "state of grace"—to give them "a title to the influences of the Holy Spirit?" No, but because they "*have* received the HOLY GHOST as well as we." Acts x. 47. How could the Apostle more directly contradict the high church principles? Considered in this light, as a mere *symbol* of a change already experienced, it is not surprising that so little stress was laid on baptism by the apostles. "Christ," says Paul, "sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." How different would have been his language if he imagined, that baptism was invariably followed by renewing influences from on high! Regarded in this light, the power of administering it, is the most awful and momentous prerogative ever conferred on man. Armed with such power, the apostle had only to persuade men to receive the washing of water at his hands, and they were instantly converted, made "children of God," and "heirs of the kingdom."

But these pretensions reach still farther. The followers of Dr. Hobart declare, that "the *only* mode through which we can obtain a title to those blessings (of the gospel) is the sacrament of baptism." "Repentance, faith and obedience, will not of *themselves* be effectual to our salvation." Other high churchmen know and believe nothing to the *contrary* of this, and the practical effect therefore is precisely the same. Now here too, we apprehend, is if possible a still more direct contradiction of the word of God. "REPENT, that your sins *may* be blotted out." "Thy FAITH *hath* saved thee." "BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou *shalt* be saved." "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth." "In every nation, he that *feareth* Him, (God,) and *worketh righteousness* is accepted of Him." Such are the conditions of salvation as pointed out in the scriptures. Not one word is said of baptism as indispensable to salvation, and as if

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\* Children were baptized on the ground of their parent's faith. In this they solemnly *dedicated* their children to God, and gained for them the privilege of a relation to the visible church.

to silence all pretensions of this kind, in a single sentence, God has added, "Circumcision (to which baptism succeeds as a different form of the same rite,) is *nothing*, and *un*-circumcision is *nothing*, but a NEW CREATURE;" proving demonstrably, that the new birth is not only something entirely distinct from any outward rites, but wholly independent of them. Such are the contradictions to the word of God involved in the sentiments in question!

IV. We shall now turn, for a moment, to consider the influence of such doctrines, *on the spiritual state of those who are educated in their belief*. Nothing can be more certain than this, that all the scriptural representations of the condition and character of men by nature, are deeply humbling and painful. Their direct tendency is to alarm the sinner, to lay him low in the dust before God, and to drive him to utter despair of relief from any human intervention or aid. They urge him to instantaneous and unreserved submission to God. Even in the most distinguished saints, we see the evidence of this humbling tendency. "I abhor myself," says Job, "and repent in dust and ashes." "I was shapen in iniquity," says the psalmist, "and in sin did my mother conceive me." "Oh, wretched man that I am," exclaimed Paul, in view of the deep depravity of his heart. Now we ask, is there not the utmost danger, that impenitent sinners, under the influence of the sentiments in question, will fall entirely short of any such views of their character and condition? Is there no one whose eye now rests on these pages, to whom the language just quoted from the scriptures, seems strange and unaccountable? Is it not the tendency of the views in which multitudes are educated, to make them believe that their depravity is trifling, since it requires only such easy expedients to remove it? Do they not feel that it *is* removed, and its curse avoided by the simple reception of ordinances—that they have only to be baptized, confirmed, and to continue in the observance of stated rites, and they are regenerated, their sins washed away, and themselves made children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven? They enter on a course of religious duty; they have been made christians by baptism; they observe the services of the church; they hold a constituent part in divine worship;—all along with which, they are told, the grace of God is connected, and that by it, they are cultivating their good feelings or religious natures—"nourishing that grace which is given to every man to profit withal." At length they are confirmed, at which time, it is announced to them, that the Holy Ghost is imparted, and as they rise from the rite of confirmation, they are saluted as "children of the kingdom and heirs of heaven." Having taken on themselves the vows of their godfathers and godmothers, and received the last ordinance of consecration from one professedly delegated to open the kingdom of heaven, they are re-assured of "a title to all the privileges and blessings of Christ's purchase."



Now what is the influence of all this on the unsuspecting disciples of this system? Do they not imagine that they are sure of salvation, if they simply persevere in the course on which they have thus entered? As they have been baptized, they think of course, and they are taught to believe so, that they "*have a title to the kingdom of heaven.*" Every repetition of prescribed devotional service, becomes an advancing step in their sanctification. The responses and observances of the sanctuary, rise every sabbath, as additional securities of God's favor—to be acknowledged at the day of judgment, as preparing a soul of his own new creation, for his endless service. The writer of these remarks, has had too much experience in this kind of service and in these sentiments, not to be fully persuaded of the certainty and baneful effects of this influence. A righteousness was created in his soul, which was neither borrowed from the Redeemer's merits, nor purified by the Holy Spirit. It was a righteousness wrought out by the simple and easy service of church prescription. Here he rested his hope; and was told on authority which he had no wish to question, that while repentance, faith and obedience, will not of themselves be effectual to salvation, this is "the mode" and the "only mode" of securing a "title to the blessings and privileges of Christ's purchase." Who under the belief of such a system, would not feel sure of salvation, in proportion to the multiplication of prescribed ordinances? If pressed with the necessity of a spiritual regeneration, their answer is ready, "It has already commenced, and we are advancing cheerfully forward to its full completion." How is it possible for such persons to listen with any but indignant feelings, to pointed statements of their guilt and danger as sinners? What necessity can there be, in their view, of any of that violence spoken of in the scriptures, with which men are to press into the kingdom of heaven? Where is the need of that armor of Paul, the panoply of God, to meet and conquer the powers of hell? Such things they are prone to consider as belonging to a different state of the church, and as having no just or natural application to themselves. We appeal to every man who has preached to such persons, with a seriousness and pungency borrowed from the word of God, whether he has not found his instructions fall utterly powerless on their minds? and whether the whole tendency of this system, is not to lock up the soul in a state of dreadful insensibility to their real condition, in the view of Him who searcheth the heart?

We do not wish to say it invidiously, but we are entirely unable to discover how the thorough going High Church doctrine on this subject, differs from that of the Papists. An exclusive divine right to confer a "title to salvation," is claimed equally by both. It is the *opus operatum*, the outward act, which in the view of both secures



this title. "There is no salvation out of the Catholic church," is the axiom of the one; and we find much the same in the declarations, "Baptism is the *only* mode," etc. and, "I have yet to learn where a *promise* to fallen man is to be found, that is not *limited* on the previous condition, that he be a member of the visible (i. e. Episcopal) church upon earth." We have no disposition to run the parallel farther. It is with pain that we have alluded at all, to these remains of the "old doctrine" amongst any members of a venerable protestant church.

We now turn to consider the influence of Arminianism, under the sanction, and in connection with the usages, of the high church. The Arminian system has an endless diversity of appearances and numberless varieties of influence. As Mosheim justly remarks, "it is a kind of medley, which can have no fixed and stable form or system of doctrine." Its ramifications are ever springing forth, fresh and vigorous; and it is impossible to specify all the results, which rise in some form or other from this fruitful system of protean theology. We shall therefore only say, that *the opinions and practices under review, seem to us to destroy that broad distinction between sin and holiness, the righteous and the wicked, which enters so deeply into man's present character and future prospects.* Their advocates address their hearers alike; presupposing in all, that infusion of grace or principle of moral goodness, which only requires a careful cultivation in all, to ripen to the full maturity of holiness. They do not admit that there is any *radical* distinction among men, which has been created by a change of their moral natures. They are not accustomed therefore, to bring home the searching truths of inspiration, and lay them, with the authority of the Almighty upon the consciences of men; and we are not aware, that the preaching of this class of divines is calculated to disturb the conscience of the sinner, or to create a belief in that *plague of the heart*, which God pronounces to be *desperate wickedness.* All men are supposed to have some goodness from the beginning, and are all along treated as the gospel treats those only, who are new creatures in Christ Jesus. "The preachers of this school," says the Christian Observer, "address their auditors almost promiscuously as christians, because professedly and by the sacrament of baptism they are such. Our view, on the other hand, is, that a large portion of them, are not christians, except in name; and should, therefore be addressed, not merely as needing to be exhorted to higher advances in goodness and virtue; but to *become* christians in the spiritual sense of the term." These remarks were called forth by the following passage in a work under review. "*No limit* can be prescribed to all persons, beyond which, indulgence in pleasure is sinful. The variety in the constitution of human character, and the difference of strength in the passions of different individuals, pla-

ces at different degrees, the point, where indulgence becomes sinful." Well does the Christian Observer add. "We are alarmed at the oversight, that gave birth to this passage and the consequences to which it might lead, especially in the volume in which it appears. We see nothing in all the bible warranting allowance in pleasure, (we know not of what kind) according to the strength of passion in different individuals."\*

To what does this want of discrimination in preaching directly lead? As it arises from a want of discrimination in regard to truth and religious experience, it leads to a want of discrimination in respect to christian character and communion. It is saying to all, except those who are too grossly wicked to believe it, that they are christians. Is it not a fact indeed, that most of the congregation are, at some period of their lives, invited and urged to partake of those ordinances, which are the divinely appointed seals of experimental piety? And thus, under a fatal delusion, how many indulge in those pleasures of life which the gospel forbids, and in a conformity to the world, wholly inconsistent with the piety it enjoins! We know, that the preachers of whom we now speak, sometimes allude to a future and endless retribution of misery. But surely the heirs of the kingdom of heaven," "the children of God," cannot consider themselves as exposed to such a doom. Such are the accustomed addresses and instructions of these preachers, that few, if any, are found sufficiently depraved, within the circle of their ministrations, to feel that they deserve such tremendous punishment, as any evil must be that is eternal. If we mistake not, their congregations as a body feel like one common family, moving on together, under the saving culture of their religious services and the grace of God, with the assurance of his everlasting complacency.

It is a belief in native grace, or a remnant of moral goodness in the heart, together with the supposed efficacy attached to baptism, which leads to this indiscriminate treatment of the mixed multitudes of a worshipping assembly. And this of necessity destroys the scriptural distinction between the righteous and the wicked; for it will be remembered, that most, if not all, have adopted "*the mode*" and "*the only mode*" of securing "*a title* to the blessings and privileges of Christ's purchase," and have those native and nurtured principles of resemblance to God, which are to expand into the perfection of holiness. How natural is it, that a confidence and hope should thus be engendered, which rest not on a distinct sense of a union of soul to Christ, not on a feeling of unreserved submission to the law and government of God, against whom

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\* Review of Bishop Hobart's Sermons.

we were conscious of having stood forth in the attitude of rebellion, but on a hope built upon man's native and cherished fitness for God's eternal presence and favor, which at once sets aside the fear of eternal wrath, from every soul that has been brought under the protection of High Church ordinances. It is owing to this fact, we conceive, that Unitarianism has always made so little progress, in a community where High Church and Arminian principles, are prevalent. There is no *demand* for Unitarianism in such a community. Are any offended with that kind of preaching which shows man his utterly depraved and ruined condition, and which sends him for relief to an almighty Savior? they can find a refuge from such humbling and painful admonitions, under the soothing messages of those, who treat all their hearers as made "heirs of God" in baptism, and as needing only the steady culture of inherent grace, to prepare the soul for heaven. It is not, to any great extent, the speculative question of the Trinity, which makes men Unitarians: it is a settled disgust for the doctrine of man's entire want of holiness by nature, and his dependence on special and distinguishing grace for the renewal of the heart. Where these doctrines can be escaped on easier terms, few will find any inducement to become followers of Arius or Socinus.

V\*. We shall advert to only one topic more. *High Churchmen refuse in general to unite with christians of other denominations, in every benevolent design of a religious nature.* All their efforts of this kind are avowedly directed to a single object, that of building up their own sect. And so far do they carry these exclusive principles, as to stand aloof even from the efforts to promote temperance and other kindred objects. Now we do not question their *right* to act as they please in this matter; but we wish to remind them, that they exercise this right under the most solemn responsibilities. For nearly fifteen centuries, the great enterprise of publishing the gospel to every creature, has stood still amidst the guilty contentions of sects and parties, within the bosom of the church. A better spirit has dawned on the present age. A WILBERFORCE and TEIGNMOUTH in England, and a JAY and MILNOR in this country, have been foremost among those, who have laid down all sectarian feelings, at the altar of our common faith. In doing so, have they not acted in the true spirit of the great apostle of the gentiles, who could rejoice to see the gospel proclaimed at Rome, even by those Judaizing teachers, who sought "to add affliction to his bonds?" And now, when we have the *pure* word of God in our hands, when our Savior calls on us to publish it to every creature,

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\* The remarks under this last head were excluded from the review, as it originally appeared, for want of room.



when the whole protestant world are waking to this long neglected duty, and seem ready in their love of the bible, to lay aside all minor differences, and take away the reproach of their enemies, "see how these christians *hate* one another"—what shall we say of that spirit which stands aloof from so noble a union, and cannot trust the bible to speak its own language, unless accompanied by a Confession of Faith, a Manual of doctrine and discipline, or the Book of Common Prayer? Let the example of high church men on this subject, be followed in each of our denominations (and it is already followed much too far) and all our religious charities will be turned into vast engines of mutual attack, and the wealth of the church, which might convert the world, will be wasted in a guilty strife for sectarian aggrandizement. The phantom of *uniformity* in religious rites, has deluded the church for more than twelve centuries. The better spirit of the present age calls upon us to learn, at last, to differ on minor points, in a spirit of kindness; and to unite all our efforts for the extension of our common faith. Great is the responsibility of those, who resist such a spirit; and who seek to perpetuate those exclusive principles of sect, which by filling all christendom with mutual animosities, would forever prevent, while they are cherished, the approach of the millennial glory.

We have already intimated, that the foregoing remarks are applicable not to the Episcopal church *as such*, but to a portion of its members, who have departed from the catholic principles, and self-abasing doctrines, of its original founders. Concerning this defection, many of the most pious and devoted members of that church, both in England and America, have publicly spoken in terms far stronger than any which we have used. Believing the principles in question to be unscriptural and dangerous, we cannot be expected to see them urged industriously on those of our own communion, without occasionally expressing our sentiments. But the present remarks, prepared as they were originally some months since, and at quite a distance, have no reference to any recent events or discussions, in the vicinity of their publication. They were made, we are well assured, with feelings of entire kindness towards those from whom the writer differs. It is against principles, and not men, that he has spoken; and our earnest prayer is that all parties, on this subject, may feel with the excellent Hooker, that "ten words spoken in the spirit of meekness, are better than volumes of controversy."

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\* The bible, said an American bishop, echoing the words of an English prelate, the bible without note or comment, may make good christians, *but it makes bad churchmen*. Such is an undisguised exhibition of high church principles.